



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GOVERNOR HONORS ARIZONA'S TOP TEACHERS
Twenty-five Arizona educators earn distinguished title

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano today announced Arizona's first Master Teachers at the State Board of Education meeting in Phoenix. The Master Teachers program is designed to match talented, experienced educators with new or struggling teachers in an effort to encourage them to stay on the job.

Twenty-five educators statewide were named Distinguished Educators, and 18 of those have agreed to take on the responsibility of Master Teacher. Each of the honorees had to complete a strenuous process to be named a Distinguished Educator and agree to mentor other teachers for at least three years before earning the title of Master Teacher.

Such programs have been shown to accelerate the effectiveness of new teachers by two to three years and increase the retention rate of experienced teachers by as much as 50 percent. Studies show that experienced teachers are essential to children's success in school.

"These individuals represent the best of what the Arizona educational system has to offer, and they should be proud of their accomplishments," said Governor Napolitano. "Their commitment to mentoring younger teachers will help ensure that the next generation of educators will have the skills to provide Arizona's children with the education they deserve."

Governor Napolitano first announced her plans to create a Master Teacher program in 2004 to provide mentors to new teachers so they can sharpen their skills. The Master Teacher program began in 2004 and was developed by the Arizona K12 Center using a framework approved by the State Board of Education. The Master Teacher Initiative also encourages experienced teachers to seek National Board Certification. Since its inception, the program has increased by 50 percent the number of Arizona teachers pursuing National Board Certification. It has also doubled the number of minority and rural teachers participating in this advanced teacher development and recognition program.

The Master Teacher initiative is the first program to use its resources to target schools least likely to have mentors and to have the greatest difficulty attracting and retaining quality educators such as in rural and isolated schools and schools with many children living in poverty. Master Teacher grants are used to provide ongoing mentor training to Master Teachers, fund stipends for Master Teachers and to develop Master Teachers through National Board scholarships.

A complete list of the Master Teachers and Distinguished Educators is below.

Master Teachers (School district in parentheses)

Sandy Czachor – Rio Vista/Mesa Verde School (Amphitheatre)
Cynthia Daniels – Paradise Valley USD No. 69 (Paradise Valley Unified)
Brenda Kreidler – Walker/Wilson (Amphitheatre)
Amy Marshall – Marie Bartlett Heard (Phoenix Elementary)
Elizabeth Minno – Nash/Ironwood (Amphitheatre)
Annette Orelup – Prince/Donaldson (Amphitheatre)
Debra Romancho – Hoaway/Harelson Elementary (Amphitheatre)
Mary Tafoya-Rodriguez – Heard/Emerson School (Phoenix Elementary)
Jeannie Wager – Amphitheatre/Cross Middle School (Amphitheatre)
Judith Ann White – W.F. Killip Elementary (Flagstaff)
Delyssa Begay – Chinle High (Chinle)
Constance Benally – Tuba City Junior High (Tuba City)
Norma Booth – Mexiacayotl Academy (Charter)
Delma Glasgow – Tuba City Junior High (Tuba City)
W. Darlene Mansouri – Keeling and Copper Creek Elementary (Amphitheatre)
Kathy Marston – Lowell Elementary (Phoenix Elementary)
Mary Phillips – Window Rock Elementary (Window Rock)
Connie Terrizzi – Indian Oasis Primary (Indian Oasis)
Christine Yazzie – Tse Ho Tso Primary Learning Center (Window Rock)

Distinguished Educators (School district in parentheses)

Nichole Evans – Mesquite Junior High (Gilbert)
Taryl Hargens – Sunset Canyon Elementary (Paradise Valley Unified)
Rose Kilmas-Smith – Finley Farms Elementary (Gilbert)
Karen Lynn Weber – Flagstaff High (Flagstaff)
Diana Laufenberg – Mount Elden Middle School (Flagstaff)
Chris Potter – La Cima Middle School (Amphitheatre)
Beth Sanborn – Mount Elden Middle School (Flagstaff)

